

Local Students Explore Robotics Solutions to Airport Operations Through Innovative Partnership between Kamloops Airport and School District 73

Kamloops, B.C.; October 29, 2024: Kamloops Airport and School District 73 have partnered on a skill development initiative with local Grade 6 and 7 students to create innovative solutions with Lego robotics for implementation in an airport operating environment.

Students from Westmount and Westsyde Elementary Schools and Elizabeth deVries, the school district's Technology Coordinator, joined Kamloops Airport personnel on a behind-the-scenes tour of the airport to identify opportunities where robotic solutions could address challenges in a live operating environment.

Back in the classroom lab, students created solutions to both improve the passenger experience and support airport personnel using Lego robotics technology. Teachers Mr. Michael Caputo and Mr. Jeffrey Berezowski championed the work, assisting students with design, construction, and programming robots to carry out tasks at the airport.

Once complete, students presented their completed robots to airport stakeholders and family at a community showcase held at the airport. Detailing their concepts, students elaborated on the problem-solving skills they learned in creating their robots and included financial benefits, project development and production costs.

Among the robots presented were solutions to enhance accessibility for people with physical and hidden disabilities, address gaps in the customer experience at the airport, language translation services, robotic security solutions, and even automated solutions to enhance snow removal and vegetation control on the airfield.

The event generated positive feedback from airport stakeholders, who were impressed with the innovative and creativity on display.

"On behalf of SD73, the teachers and the students who engaged in this work, we are so grateful to Kamloops Airport Ltd. for their support of this partnership, and their commitment to supporting connections and learning for our students," said Elizabeth deVries, SD73 Technology Coordinator. "Thank you to Kamloops Airport staff that were on hand to offer feedback, and to Ashley Wood, Airport Operations Coordinator, for the opportunity and the immense support."

"As a community partner, Kamloops Airport welcomes the opportunity to work with our local schools to spark interest in the aviation industry," said Ed Ratuski, Managing Director, Kamloops Airport. "This program offers students insights into various aspects of airport operations, while providing an opportunity to expand their creative technology skills and potentially explore a career in aviation," Ed Ratuski, Kamloops Airport Managing Director.

The partnership between Kamloops Airport and School District 73 is expected to continue into 2025 with the airport robotics initiative offered annually to Grade 6 students.